

John Boehner
Chairman
8th District, Ohio

House Meets at 10:00 a.m. for Legislative Business

Anticipated Floor Action:
H.R. 1469—Disaster Recovery Act



H.R. 1469—Disaster Recovery Act

Floor Situation: The House will consider H.R. 1469 as its only order of business today. Yesterday, the Rules Committee granted an open rule providing one hour of general debate, equally divided between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Appropriations Committee. The rule waives all points of order against the bill and its consideration. It self-executes (i.e., adopts into the base text upon passage of the rule) an amendment to delete the \$1.7 million appropriation for the Federal Elections Commission. The rule waives House rules which prohibit (1) unauthorized or legislative provisions in an appropriations bill, and (2) reappropriations. The rule also waives all points of order against eight amendments listed below, which may be offered only in the order listed and debated for the amount of time specified. The rule accords priority in recognition to members who have their amendments pre-printed in the *Congressional Record*. It allows the chairman of the Committee of the Whole to postpone votes during consideration, and reduce the voting time on a postponed vote to five minutes, so long as it follows a regular 15-minute vote. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Summary: H.R. 1469 appropriates \$8.4 billion in supplemental spending, including \$5.5 billion to provide disaster relief to 35 states that have been declared major disaster areas because of flooding, winter storms, and tornadoes, \$2 billion for the current operation in Bosnia and other overseas operations, and \$757.2 million in mandatory spending, mainly for veterans compensation and pensions. The bill also provides \$113.5 million in non-emergency spending, which includes (1) \$40 million for airport security equipment, (2) \$38 million for the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) food program, and (3) \$10 million to implement a new transportation system at Yosemite National Park.

To offset the increase in discretionary (non-mandatory) budget authority, the bill rescinds \$7.65 billion. Some of the largest cuts include \$3.8 billion from the Department of Housing & Urban Development Section 8 housing program, \$2.1 billion from various defense programs, \$750 million from the Airport Improvement Program, and \$588 million from Department of Transportation transit grants for rail modernization improvements and capital bus purchases.

The bill also includes several legislative provisions. Specifically, it (1) exempts emergency repairs to flood control facilities from the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in areas that have been declared federal disaster areas this year, (2) places a 14-million acre cap on enrollments in the Conservation Reserve Program for FY 1997, (3) temporarily changes the requirement that a flood insurance policy be purchased 30 days before the policy takes effect to 15 days for parties that purchase insurance between January 1, 1997, and June 30, 1997, (4) broadens the National Park Service's authority to allow individual parks to keep more money from the fees they collect, (4) allows the president to reduce foreign aid to the Ukraine, and (5) requires the Agency for International Development (USAID) to report to Congress on steps it is taking to implement the recommendations of its inspector general regarding the agency's New Management System.

CBO estimates that enactment of H.R. 1469 will reduce federal budget authority by \$33 million over the next five years. However, CBO also estimates that enactment will result in outlays of \$542 million in FY 1997, \$1.55 billion in FY 1998, \$1.18 billion in FY 1999, \$981 million in FY 2000, and \$1.54 billion in FY 2001 and future years. The Appropriations Committee ordered the bill reported by voice vote.

Views:

Republican Leadership: Supports

Chairman Livingston: Supports

President Clinton: No Position Available

Amendments: Although over 30 amendments have been filed or were submitted to the Rules Committee for consideration, the following is a list of amendments (1) protected from points of order by the rule, or (2) not specifically protected by the rule but likely to be considered on the floor because they conform to the rules of the House and the Budget Act regarding how amendments to appropriations bills must be structured. Other amendments submitted to the Rules Committee and filed with the House Clerk are not expected to be considered. The rule stipulates that the following eight amendments will be considered, in the order listed below, before any other amendments:

Ms. Kaptur, Mr. Riggs, Ms. Roukema, and Mr. Quinn may offer an amendment, debatable for 30 minutes, to provide an additional \$38 million in funding for the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Special Supplemental Food Program (matching the president's request). **Contact: 5-4146**

Mr. McKeon may offer an amendment, debatable for 10 minutes, to authorize a commission to study the costs of higher education in the U.S. and provide \$650,000 in funding for the committee to execute its duties. **Contact: Lauren Coberly, x5-1956**

Mr. Dingell may offer an amendment, debatable for 10 minutes, to provide \$300,000 to Monroe County, Michigan, for costs incurred after the crash of a Comair Airlines plane. **Contact: x5-4071**

Mr. Thune may offer an amendment, debatable for 10 minutes, to earmark \$500 million of current FY 1997 FEMA funding for block grants to state and local governments so that they may provide disaster relief to residents of the upper midwest U.S. The amendment also relaxes FEMA income requirements to allow persons of low and moderate incomes to receive disaster relief. The intent of the amendment is to ensure that maximum funding is available to residents in the wake of property damage and loss from widespread flooding. *Staff Contact: Jafar Karim, x5-2801*

Mr. Traficant may offer an amendment, debatable for 10 minutes, to ensure that all spending under the bill complies with the Buy America Act. *Contact: Paul Marcone, x5-5261*

Mr. Neumann may offer an amendment (#10), debatable for 20 minutes, to (1) strike \$2.4 million in advance FY 1998 funding for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); (2) rescind \$3.6 billion in undefined FY 1997 budget authority, requiring the president to reduce the appropriate amounts from the budgets of the affected agencies within 30 days of enactment; and (3) restore \$3.8 billion in rescissions from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). *Staff Contact: Brad Hunt, x5-3031*

Messrs. Gekas, Solomon, and Wynn may offer an amendment, debatable for 30 minutes, to prevent a government shutdown by automatically continuing FY 1997 spending at 100 percent of current spending levels after September 30, 1997, if regular appropriations legislation for FY 1998, or a continuing resolution, has not been enacted prior to that date. *Contact: Tom Santaniello (Gekas), x5-4315*

Mr. Diaz-Balart, Mr. Shaw, Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, Ms. Meek, and Mr. Kennedy (RI) may offer an amendment, debatable for 20 minutes, to postpone termination of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid payments for legal immigrants currently in the U.S. through September 30, 1997. The amendment also rescinds \$240 million from the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program. *Staff Contacts: Elizabeth Humphrey (Diaz-Balart), x5-4211*

Other Amendments: The following amendments were not specifically protected by the rule, but may be considered:

Mr. Barr may offer an amendment (#4) to prohibit funds appropriated by the bill to be used for any study of medicinal uses of marijuana. *Contact: Glee Smith, x5-2931*

Mr. Barr may offer an amendment (#5) to restore \$2 million in funding for the Law Enforcement Commission. The commission was created and authorized by the Effective Death Penalty and Antiterrorism Act (P.L. 104-132). *Contact: Glee Smith, x5-2931*

Mr. Fazio may offer an amendment (#8) to earmark \$1 million of FEMA's current fiscal year funding for counties affected by flooding in January 1997, to disperse to families so that "farm labor housing" may be replaced. Such housing is defined as, but not limited to, mobile homes, motor homes, and manufactured homes that served as permanent housing for flood victims. *Contact: x5-5716*

Mr. Goodling may offer an amendment (#16) to prohibit funding allocated to the Department of Education from being used to develop, plan, or administer any national reading or mathematics testing program for school children. *Contact: x5-5836*

Mr. Goodling may offer an amendment (#17 or #18) to prohibit any funds in the bill from being used to develop, plan, or administer any national reading or mathematics testing program for school children. *Contact: x5-5836*

Mr. Kennedy (MA) may offer an amendment (#19) to transfer \$2 million from FEMA disaster relief funding to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Institute. *Contact: x5-5111*

Mr. LaHood may offer an amendment (#20) to restore funding for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) which was removed from the bill during committee consideration. *Staff Contact: Chris Guidry, x5-6201*

Mr. Neumann may offer an amendment (#12) to strike \$1.7 billion in advance FY 1998 funding for FEMA. *Staff Contact: Brad Hunt, x5-3031*

Ms. Norton may offer an amendment (#21) to establish an emergency leave transfer program which would allow federal employees to donate their unused annual vacation and sick leave to other federal employees who are adversely effected during periods of major disasters or emergencies as declared by the president. The amendment directs the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to coordinate such donations between employees and agencies; OPM must also establish and publish guidelines under which participants may transfer or receive additional annual leave time. The intent of the amendment is to allow federal workers affected by major natural disasters to meet emergency needs while incurring a minimal amount of unpaid leave from their jobs. *Contact: x5-8050*

Ms. Pelosi may offer an amendment (#13) to provide \$68 million for state AIDS drug assistance programs. As an offset, the amendment cuts an equal amount from funding for Section 8 housing (from which the bill already rescinds \$3.8 billion). *Contact: x5-4965*

Mr. Sanders may offer an amendment (#14) to provide \$10 million to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to study the effects of chemicals used during the Persian Gulf War on soldiers who currently suffer from "Gulf War Syndrome." The funding is offset by cutting \$10 million from funding provided for peacekeeping operations and maintenance. *Staff Contact: Cynthia Weglarz, x5-4115*

Mr. Scarborough may offer an amendment (#15) to eliminate all nonemergency, non-defense discretionary funding provided in the bill. *Contact: David Stafford, x5-4136*

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVI, #12, May 2, 1997.



PLEASE NOTE: UNDER AN OPEN RULE, MEMBERS MAY OFFER ENTIRELY NEW AMENDMENTS TO A BILL AT ANY TIME, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY HAVE BEEN PRE-PRINTED IN THE *CONGRESSIONAL RECORD*.